



## **PUBLIC SAFETY & SECURITY COMMITTEE**

March 17, 2022

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent 168 towns and cities.

### **HB 5420      An Act Concerning Mental Health Needs Of And Services For Police Officers, Certain Requirements Regarding Police Training And Certain Reports**

The bill would, among other things, prohibit discipline of a police officer as a result of behavioral health assessment; requires the Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) Council to develop training curriculum for police officer interactions with persons who have mental or physical disabilities; fund crisis intervention training for police officers; establish a task force to study the mental health needs of law enforcement officers; require a report regarding the use of online or remote technology by POST for police officer training after initial certification; and require a report on the Community and Law Enforcement for Addiction Recovery project.

CCM supports efforts that will streamline and improve police officer training. In particular, if greater efforts are focused on virtual training opportunities this may assist local departments reduce overtime and travel costs associated with sending officers to complete mandated training at remote facilities. However, without adequate State funding to develop this program, it will not meet the objective of lowering training costs. Therefore, we implore the legislature to provide the necessary funding and support to ensure these objectives are met.

In addition, while CCM is still determining the impacts of the proposal regarding the consequences associated with the provision that prohibits a police officers from being disciplined as a result of a behavioral health assessment, we are cautiously optimistic that it will provide law enforcement with the reassurance to seek mental health care without the fear of employment ramifications. CCM remains committed to providing first responders with necessary mental health services in an appropriate and balanced manner. If the organizational sentiment does change, we are hopeful to work with the legislature to address those concerns.

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If you have any questions, please contact Mike Muszynski, State and Federal Relations Manager of CCM at [mmuszynski@ccm-ct.org](mailto:mmuszynski@ccm-ct.org) or 203-500-7556.